

Salt River Fire Department Operating Guidelines

Self Contained Breathing Apparatus

April 2000

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Purpose

It is the policy of the Salt River Fire Department that all personnel expected to respond and function in areas of atmospheric contamination shall be equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus (S.C.B.A.) and trained in its proper use and maintenance.

Members shall achieve a **NON-LEAKING** face piece-to-skin seal **WITH THE MASK**. Facial hair shall not be allowed at points where the S.C.B.A. face piece is designed to seal with the face.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS SHALL BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THIS REQUIREMENT.

Each member of the Operations Division shall be accountable for one (1) S.C.B.A. and shall check the condition of that S.C.B.A. at the beginning of each shift, after each use, and at any other time it may be necessary to render the equipment in a ready state of condition. Each member shall be accountable for his or her personal face piece and regulator (as applicable). Each member is also required to undergo a medical examination annually if they are expected to respond and function in areas of atmospheric contamination.

Company officers shall assign a specific S.C.B.A. to each crewmember. Each crewmember will be responsible for the proper use and function of that S.C.B.A.

If a S.C.B.A. is found to be functioning improperly, it shall be taken out of service, red tagged, reported, and replaced immediately. Replacement S.C.B.A.'s shall be obtained from the duty Captain.

The intent of the S.C.B.A. policy is to avoid any respiratory contact with products of combustion, super heated gases, toxic products or other hazardous contaminants.

The use of breathing apparatus means that personnel shall have face piece in place, breathing air from the supply provided.

Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus shall be used by all personnel operating:

1. In a contaminated atmosphere
2. In an atmosphere which may suddenly become contaminated
3. In an atmosphere which is oxygen deficient
4. In an atmosphere which is suspected of being contaminated or oxygen deficient

This includes all personnel operating:

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1. In an active fire area
2. Directly above an active fire area
3. In a potential explosion or fire area, including gas leaks and fuel spills
4. Where products of combustion are visible in the atmosphere, including vehicle fires and dumpster fires
5. Where invisible contaminants are suspected to be present (i.e. Carbon Monoxide during overhaul)
6. Where toxic products are present, suspected to be present, or may be released without warning in any confined space that has not been tested to establish respiratory safety

In addition to the above, S.C.B.A. shall be worn by all personnel operating at fire incidents above ground, below ground or in any other area, which is not, but which may become contaminated by products of combustion or other hazardous substances.

Premature removal of S.C.B.A. must be avoided at all times. This is particularly significant during overhaul when smoldering materials may produce increased quantities of carbon monoxide and other toxic products. In these cases S.C.B.A. must be used or the atmosphere must be changed.

In routine fire situations, the decision to remove S.C.B.A. shall be made by Company Officers, with the approval of Sector Officers, based on an evaluation of atmospheric conditions. Prior to removal, fire areas shall be thoroughly ventilated and, where necessary, continuous ventilation shall be provided.

If there is any doubt about respiratory safety, S.C.B.A. use shall be maintained until the atmosphere is established to be safe by testing. Safety Sector personnel shall be responsible for this determination. This is required in complex situations, particularly when toxic materials may be involved.

An evaluation of all members of the Operations Division in the use of the S.C.B.A. shall be conducted annually. Each member shall be able to demonstrate a high level of proficiency and compatibility with the S.C.B.A. under conditions, which simulate those, expected as a job requirement. Each member shall also demonstrate an effective face piece to skin seal of the S.C.B.A. face piece.